

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Future With Hope

A Future With Hope, (“AFWH”) is a Vital Mission Partner of United Methodists of Greater New Jersey and serves as the mission arm of the organization. Formed in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy in 2012, AFWH has the following vision: Hope emerges where residents, business, organizations, government and institutions work together to heal communities.

During the relief phase in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, AFWH:

- Provided more than 50,000 meals
- Provided day and night shelter for more than 5,000 people
- Distributed more than 11,000 cleaning buckets, more than 3,000 health kits, tons of clothing and other material supplies such as non-perishable food, heaters, blankets, etc.
- Assessed community needs and “mucked” out nearly 2,000 homes

During the recovery phase of Superstorm Sandy, AFWH:

- Rebuilt or repaired 273 homes
- Provided case management for 461 families
- Hosted more than 12,000 volunteers from 48 states and two countries for a labor value of \$8,095,413
- Received an estimated \$17 million in funding

Today, AFWH is focused on community renewal with an asset-based community development ministry that creates Hope Centers.

AFWH’s community development ministry focuses in three areas:

1. Engaging congregations and communities in Communities of Hope training. Communities of Hope trains congregations and communities in strategic planning, community organizing, systemic change, and working inter culturally. At the end of the training, each Community of Hope team has a community strategic plan to guide its work.
2. Developing, overseeing and resourcing Hope Centers. Hope Centers are congregations and community centers affiliated with GNJ that identify and provide needed services within a community.
3. Leading community economic development projects that include housing development and repurposing church buildings.

AFWH has 17 Hope Centers. Hope Centers connect United Methodists with community residents, school, nonprofit organizations, businesses, town governments, and other faith groups to feed the hungry, provide high quality childcare and educational enrichment for students, build affordable housing, assist the homeless and offer job training.

In 2019, AFWH hired a new Executive Director, Richard Reinhard and elected new board leadership to include Chris Heckert as Chair and Niurca Louis as Vice Chair.

Submitted by,
Rick Reinhard, Executive Director

Africa University

Africa University thrives in ministry because of the steadfast support of the local congregations of The United Methodist Church. Thank you to the members of the Greater New Jersey Conference for prioritizing Africa University and its ministry with an investment of 100 percent of your asking to the Africa University Fund (AUF) apportionment in 2018.

In sowing so consistently into the Africa University Fund, the Greater New Jersey Conference continues to affirm the university’s core mission of nurturing leaders who help communities to know Christ and to experience peace, sustainable livelihoods, food security and abundant health.

Institutional Update:

- In 2018, Africa University enrolled more than 700 new students and maintained an overall enrollment of around 2,000 students. There were 25 African countries represented in the student body. Women made up 53 percent of the student population, which is almost twice the average for African higher education institutions.
- Throughout 2018, Africa University weathered the challenges of Zimbabwe’s depressed and uncertain socio-economic environment with creativity and prudence. The university delivered teaching, learning and community service activities of high-quality without interruption, while also renewing and expanding its infrastructure. Key enhancements in 2018 included the

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

refurbishment of three residence halls for women students and the full implementation of an ERP software system to integrate and manage all facets of the university's operations.

- With conflict, poverty, and the impact of climate change persisting as the key drivers of food insecurity and the rise in internal displacement, migration, and refugee hood in Africa, the university consolidated its position as a trailblazer by offering new graduate training and research opportunities. Africa University has also continued to provide scholarships for refugee women so that their experiences, talents and ideas are integrated into the search for solutions.
- Africa University delivered critical data for reducing malaria deaths in southern Africa and controlling the spread of insect-borne diseases world-wide. AU's insectary—a laboratory for rearing and studying live insects, such as mosquitos—shares its findings through the Southern Africa Centers of Excellence for Malaria Research. This data informs regional policies, practices and malaria control efforts.

The students, faculty, administrators and trustees of Africa University thank the members of the Greater New Jersey Conference for their prayers and support, which continue to grow and sustain its ministry. Thank you, Greater New Jersey United Methodists, for all that you have invested in mission and ministry through Africa University over the past 27 years. Our shared story is one of transformation, hope and realized dreams, ensuring for the congregations of the Greater New Jersey Conference a witness that is real and far-reaching (John 13:34-35). As Africa University and the Greater New Jersey Conference move forward together in missional engagement, we trust in God's unending grace for the increase.

Submitted by,

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Africa University

Archives and History, Commission on

2018 has been a productive year of engaging in the ministry of memory for the GNJC Commission on Archives and History (CAH), as we supported vital congregations by encouraging clergy, lay leaders and church historians to strengthen their Wesleyan identity and fulfilled our Disciplinary mandate to identify, preserve and make available the historic record of ministry within GNJ. We encourage the celebration of our Wesleyan heritage and the preservation of local church history through the annual Robert B. Steelman Church History award, the Morris L. Smith Ethnic Church History award and the John C. Goodwin Multi-Media History Award, as well as through the recognition of significant church anniversaries.

We recognize congregations which were transformational in the life of our annual conference by identifying and recommending churches or locations as Conference Historic Sites and nominating them for recognition by GCAH as UM Historic Sites.

Further, we post guidelines for Church Historians, suggestions for writing church histories, records retention schedules and other valuable historical resources online and available through the CAH webpage on the GNJC website. Likewise, we provide links to access digital copies of The Historical Trail and The Circuit Writer, the respective historical journals of the former SNJ & NNJ Annual Conferences, which are available on Internet Archive.

Additionally, we collaborate with local churches and the GNJC Historical Society to provide regional venues for congregations to honor their unique faith stories and share those stories within GNJC and the NE Jurisdiction. Foremost, we maintain our GNJ Archival collection in the GCAH vault at the Archives and History Center at Drew University in Madison. Our materials are available to local churches through the services of the Archival librarian. Our extensive physical archival and digital collections serve as resources within which local churches can research their "Methodist DNA" and function as repositories where they can safely and securely store, process and maintain their historical records and artifacts.

We also stand ready to provide consultation on historical issues and assistance in planning and celebrating significant anniversaries and events, including providing speakers to lift up the historical significance of the church or explore other topics related to our Wesleyan tradition, American Methodism and GNJ history.

2018 CAH highlights include:

1. Archival Space: We preserve the historical records of closed churches within the bounds of GNJC and its antecedents and provide for the retention of the corporate records of GNJC boards, agencies and committees. We manage a 1,113 cubic foot archival collection, which is located in the fire-safe and climate controlled archival depository in the vault of the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH), UMC, in Madison, NJ. Our archival space is secured through a unique and cost-effective rental agreement with GCAH, which is preserves our closed church and conference agency records and demonstrates effective stewardship by limiting the impact of archival costs on our shared ministry budget.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2. Ancestry.com: Our GNJCAH page on Ancestry.com received a total of 499,410 page-views, 286,115 image views and 213,295 text views for 2018. As a result, our closed church vital statistics (births, baptisms, deaths and marriage records) are easily accessible, highly utilized and extend our CAH influence far beyond GNJ!
3. Internet Archive: We support an extensive digital library of historical journals and resources on Internet Archive (IA) and maintain a link to this resource from the GNJC website. IA is a free portal that allows us to post an unlimited amount of historical material on the internet. Utilizing IA has increased the number of historical resources we make available online and reduced our impact on GNJC data rates. In 2018, 83 items on IA were accessed, which generated 3,420 page-views.
4. Consultation and Speaking: One of our members attended a historic site dedication in 2018. Other members remain available to assist local churches in reflecting upon their Wesleyan identity and role within the mission of GNJC.
5. Advertising and Displays: We ran advertisements to promote our annual church history contests in GNJ Digest and UM Relay, updated our commission information and resources on the GNJC Website, and hosted a display table at annual conference which highlighted our awards, conference historic sites and the work of the commission.
6. Conference Historic Sites: We presented three nominations for Conference Historic Site status that were approved by vote of the 2018 Session of GNJAC. These three new sites are the Kingwood UMC in Hunterdon County, Clarksboro: Evangelical UMC in Gloucester County and Union City: Emmanuel UMC in Hudson County. All are now listed on the GCAH denominational Historic Site list and either have already or will receive UMC Historic Site Markers. Nominating these sites created excitement about our historic heritage at annual conference and has proven to be a way that CAH can inspire our congregations to celebrate their place in the mission and ministry of GNJC. We are nominating Centenary University in Hackettstown, NJ to be considered as a Conference Historic Site by the 2019 GNJ Annual Conference Session.
7. The Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award: The Steelman Award is given annually to the local church that submits a history which best exemplifies an inclusive narrative on the life and ministry of the congregation from its beginnings to the present day. We awarded the 2018 Steelman Award to Centenary UMC in Metuchen, NJ. We are recognizing First UMC in Dover, NJ as the 2019 Steelman Award winner.
8. Evangelical UMC & GNJC Historical Society: CAH collaborated with Evangelical UMC in Clarksboro, NJ and the GNJC Historical Society by supporting the Historical Society's 2018 Annual Meeting and historical program on Saturday, October 29, 2018 celebrating The 50th Anniversary of The United Methodist Church. Rev. Fred Day, General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, was the keynote speaker. While there, we presented Evangelical UMC with their Conference Historic Site plaque. Through this collaboration we encouraged the telling of the stories of our faith tradition and recognized the contributions of one of our historic congregations.
9. NEJCAH: We continue to have a representative, Donald DeGroat, on the Northeast Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History Executive Board, which gives GNJ CAH a presence, leadership role and influence on the jurisdictional commission. Additionally, our chairperson and Don attended the NEJCAH meeting in Lancaster, PA in May 2018 and actively supported the ministry of the jurisdictional commission.
10. Recognition of Significant Local Church Anniversaries: We presented recognition certificates to those churches celebrating major anniversaries and received positive feedback that congregations were excited to receive the acknowledgement.
11. Work of the Archivist: Our commission assisted local churches efforts to document their past ministry with the help of our volunteer archivist, Walt Jones. Walt responded to 42 specific information requests in 2018. Walt and Mark Shenise received a number of requests for information from Eryn Boyce and Beverly Schol. Eryn is the historian with the Hunter Research, Inc. and conducts some research on the Windsor UMC, and Springfield Emanuel UMC. We provided them with a listing of the materials contained in the Windsor UMC church collection, which pertain to the churches' cemetery. In this way, we assisted the Conference Trustees with clarification of issues of boundaries and deeds, etc.
12. Cost Effectiveness: A metric that is harder to quantify, but no less valuable, is the combined total of resources accessed by individuals annually. The combined metrics of Ancestry.com, Internet Archive, the Work of the Archivist above, along with page views of our GNJ webpage, demonstrate that we were good stewards of conference resources, because we supported and resourced a significant amount of inquiry at no or limited expense to the 2018 GNJC Shared Ministry budget.

GNJ Conference Historic Sites 2018

1. 44 Cape May Monument, Cape May, NJ
2. 174 Mt Zion UM Church, Lawnside, N

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

3. 175 First UM Church, Trenton, NJ
4. 176 Head of the River UM Church, Estell Manor, NJ
5. 177 First UM Church, Salem, NJ
6. 178 Ocean Grove Camp Meeting, Ocean Grove, NJ
7. 207 Broad Street UM Church, Burlington, NJ
8. 214 Old First UM Church, West Long Beach, NJ
9. 223 Batsto-Pleasant Mills Meeting House, Pleasant Mills, NJ
10. 224 Gloucester Point, Gloucester, NJ
11. 272 First UM Church, Sea Bright, NJ
12. 273 John Wesley UM Church, Swainton, NJ
13. 274 Trinity UM Church, Merchantville, NJ
14. 284 Pemberton UM Church, Pemberton, NJ
15. 291 Old Stone Church, Woolwich Township, NJ
16. 320 Mt. Hope UM Church, Salem, NJ
17. 426 "Old Main", Pennington School, Pennington, NJ
18. 483 Mount Tabor Camp Meeting, Mount Tabor, NJ
19. 500 South Seaville Camp Meeting Association, South Seaville, NJ
20. 509 Flanders UM Church, Flanders, NJ
21. 510 The Neighborhood Center in Camden, NJ
22. 511 Port Elizabeth UM Church, Port Elizabeth, NJ
23. 513 McCullough House, Asbury, NJ
24. 514 Asbury UM Church, Asbury, NJ
25. 519 Franklin-St. John's UMC, Newark, NJ
26. 520 Morristown UM Church, Morristown, NJ
27. 522 The Theological School, Drew University, Madison, NJ
28. 537 Frankford Plains UMC, Frankford Plains, Sussex County, NJ
29. 538 Old Stone Church, Upper Nyack, NY
30. 539 St. John UM Church, Fairfield Twp., NJ (Fordville)
31. 551: Evangelical UM Church, Clarksboro, NJ
32. 552: Kingwood UM Church, Stockton, NJ
33. 553: Emanuel UM Church, Union City, NJ

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

[GNJC sites currently listed on the General Commission on Archives and History (GCAH) Conference Historic Site roster. Sites listed in order registered by GCAH. GCAH Historic Site Number precedes the church name.]

Submitted by,

John D. Callahan, Chairperson

Church and Society, Board of

The GNJAC Board of Church and Society has partnered with the conference immigration task force to approach a variety of actions and public demonstrations on behalf of immigrant rights and fair treatment. In July, this partnership organized an ecumenical rally outside the ICE detention center in Elizabeth, New Jersey, where immigrant families were being retained. Participating in the rally were Bishop Schol, several conference staff members, board members and Dean Javier Viera of Drew Theological School. Following this rally, several C&S board members were trained as advocates by the First Friends non-profit organization; this training is ongoing. Board members also rallied in Trenton, supporting legislation allowing immigrants to get drivers' licenses. The Board has also worked on Fair Wage legislation support and signed onto the lawsuit against school segregation. The Board has been thankful for the support of the conference staff as we've engaged these programs and plans and anticipate ongoing collaboration.

Submitted by,

Tanya Linn Bennett

Ordained Ministry Report, Board of

As I complete my third year as chair of the Greater New Jersey Board of Ordained Ministry, I rejoice in the way that God is working through the members of the Board in ordering the life of the clergy and serving the annual conference. In addition, as we shepherd, serve and journey with candidates in their season with us, it is a privilege to walk with them, offer them support and guidance and assist them in discerning where God is calling them – all while doing the necessary work of evaluation as a Board.

For the 2018-2019 conference year, the Board has continued to develop its process of discernment for both provisional and full member candidates. Through the examination of written materials, recommendations, sermons, interviews, site visits and other tools of assessment, the Board will assess thirty-two candidates in total – nineteen for provisional membership and thirteen who are seeking full membership.

We will also be hosting once again a Celebration of Ministry worship service and dinner on April 28 where we will recognize and give thanks for the years of service of our current class of retirees, as well as the promise of future ministry for those to be commissioned and ordained. I would especially like to thank once again the Reverend Erica Muñoz and the wonderful laity of Aldersgate UMC in East Brunswick for agreeing to host this event.

For the remainder of 2019, the Board will continue to find ways to incorporate the intercultural competency initiative into our process. We will also follow through on the future pastoral leadership training event that was held jointly with the cabinet, DCOM chairs and other conference leadership on January 16, 2019. The Board also voted to form a subcommittee of the executive committee to explore the process for evaluating candidates in a holistic way. Finally, for 2018-2019, we have instituted a covenant document for board members to sign that addresses the need for accountability and confidentiality in the process.

Allow me to conclude my report by once again thanking the entire Board team. It starts with the vice-chair, the Reverend Jessica Brendler Naulty, without whom I could not function effectively as Board chair. I am also thankful for those who so willingly take on various additional responsibilities by serving on the executive committee of the Board. Specifically, this year, I give thanks for the many years of service offered by the Reverend Eunice Vega-Perez and the Reverend Hector Burgos as they transition off the Board as members in their new role as District Superintendents. In a similar category is the Reverend Drew Dyson, who will no longer be the DS representative to the Board but will remain on the Board as a member.

There are the members of the full board who so willingly read pages of candidates' paperwork, make site visits that are often far away from their local church setting and attend retreats and other necessary meetings. As I comment every year, however, what I am most impressed with is how the Board cares for and nurtures the candidates who we see. They work very hard to ensure that the process, while evaluative, is also spirit-filled. Last, but not least, I am grateful for the administrative assistance that we so graciously receive from Beverly Karlovich in the Mission and Resource Center. Beverly is always there to support the work of the Board!

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

I give thanks to God to be able to serve with all my colleagues, both lay and clergy!

Submitted by,

Thomas J. Korkuch, Chair, Board of Ordained Ministry

Cabinet

In the midst of constant cultural shift around and within the church, raised anxieties that can result in responses and actions that are not always helpful, the Psalmist asks us to dig deeper to connect with the One who is our refuge and strength, and then to be still in the midst of the storms of shifting expectations and understandings to rest in God who will lead us through.

United Methodists in Greater New Jersey are not immune from the challenges of changing times. We are not immune from the influences of a culture that divides rather than unites, that tears down rather than builds up. As of this writing, we do not know the results of the Special Session of the General Conference, nor what the next steps will be.

In spite of the uncertainty, the cabinet of GNJ celebrates that God gives us the hope, the vision and the strength to continue to be the body of Christ in the world, firm in our commitment to continue to equip and empower clergy and laity, staying focused on the mission of making disciples for the transformation of the world.

One of the great privileges we have as a cabinet is that, in spite of the challenges, we continue to see congregations and their pastors doing Spirit-filled, creative and life-giving work in their communities and beyond. There are small congregations who do mission work that far exceeds what anyone would expect with limited numbers, middle sized and larger congregations that are engaged in ministries of justice and mercy that are transforming their communities, individual lay persons who are so inspired by the ministry of their local church that they are taking this into the workplace, young people who have heard the call of Christ and are committing themselves to full-time Christian service and clergy taking risks to engage new persons. We celebrate that in so many ways, persons across GNJ are growing in their discipleship, responding to the call to be Christ for the world firmly rooted in their faith. The faithfulness of persons of all ages, from all size churches, from all walks of life affirms the beautiful kaleidoscope that is the body of Christ that is so evident and abundant within GNJ.

With the adoption of a new strategic plan at last year's Annual Conference, the work of the cabinet is shifting to focus on meeting the goal of identifying and equipping 100 lay and clergy leaders who make disciples who make disciples. Along with this is the goal to resource 100 congregations who are ready and willing to make the cultural shifts, structural changes and mission focus to grow their churches to the next size in worship attendance. As superintendents, we often hear congregations request pastors who can do what was successful 20 or more years ago. We know that this is an ineffective strategy because a new time calls for new leadership and ministry approaches and we, partnering with the Connectional Ministry Team, are committed to providing appropriate resources to pastors and laity such as coaching, PaCE, Breakthrough, Team Vital, the Leadership Development program, the practices of 4DX (Four Disciplines of Execution) and other resources so that GNJ can move forward to meet our goal.

Our strategic plan also commits GNJ to grow in intercultural competency. The racial/ethnic, cultural and theological diversity of GNJ is an amazing blessing, but this comes with challenges in appointing strategic pastoral leadership, as well as recruiting and raising up effective, transformational leaders for future years who can effectively serve the diverse population of our region and grow the church. Working with the bishop in making appointments is a significant role of the cabinet, but it is only a part of the work of equipping congregations to more closely resemble the community in which the church is located. We continue in our disciplinary role as missional strategists to work with clergy and congregations to be outward focused and invitational to reach new people for Jesus Christ.

As superintendents, we are charged by the church to work with the bishop for supervision and oversight. This often means that we are engaged in circumstances where there are differing expectations and understandings and conflict can arise. The cabinet enters into these situations together with deep prayer and reflection, discerning the necessary steps to move forward to fulfill the mission that God has called us to fulfill.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Finally, the cabinet itself is in a time of transition as three new persons, Hector Burgos, Sang Won Doh, and Eunice Vega-Perez will transition in as new superintendents. Each brings a passion for ministry, proven experience and a deep commitment to grow the church to be more vital and relevant in our area. We also will see two of us transition off the cabinet. Drew Dyson, after five years as Raritan Valley superintendent, is starting a new phase of his journey in an extension ministry. Steve Bechtold, having completed eight years on the cabinet, will be returning to serve in the local church. Though transitions come with uncertainty, this is a time for the cabinet team to be thankful that through it all, God is with us, our refuge and strength.

Submitted by,
Steven G. Bechtold on behalf of the GNJ Cabinet

Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society (CPAS)

The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society was established by charter granted in 1857. In 2000 the charter was amended to rename the corporation The Centenary Fund and Preachers' Aid Society of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The purpose of the Fund is to provide maximum income, consistent with the preservation of principal, for the support of retired clergy and surviving spouses and dependent children of deceased clergy who have served in the GNJ Annual Conference.

A primary way the Fund meets that purpose today is by contributing towards the cost of providing retiree healthcare. In 2018 the amount contributed was \$610,000 and since 2004 the Fund has contributed approximately \$7 million for this purpose. The Fund also provides grants to pastors and their families with special needs who have requested aid, including help with extraordinary medical expenses, transportation needs and loans to assist retired pastors obtain housing in Methodist (and other) Homes, among other ways. Several such grants totaling just over \$16,000 in all were made in 2018.

The Fund has only been able to do this through the generous support of clergy, laity and churches, by means of annual contributions and periodic donations as well as bequests. Since inception the Fund has received more than \$6.3 million in donations and in 2018 over \$40,000 was donated. A generous bequest totaling almost \$90,000 was also received. The Fund Balance as of the end of 2018 was \$10,541,735 .

To continue support for retired clergy and their families in the future, increased donations will be needed. Reverend Douglas Miller is the Centenary Fund's Outreach Director and is working to increase our Donation Base. We have also partnered with the Stewardship Foundation and the Communications Committee to raise our profile and increase our support. We hope you will help us build up the Centenary Fund with your tax-free donations so that The Centenary Fund and Preachers Aid Society will be able to continue the substantial contributions needed in the future to fund retiree healthcare and to provide aid to retired clergy and their dependents.

Thank you so much for your support to date.

Submitted by,
David E Wiley III, Interim Chair

Christian Outreach Project

The Christian Outreach Project is a New Jersey non-profit corporation, recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation, a GNJ Advance Special, as well as A Future with Hope – Hope Center. COP provides free home repairs and renovations for people in northwestern New Jersey to people in need and has been in operation since 1983.

High school aged youth and adult volunteers donate their caring and skills while learning and growing in the process. In addition to home repairs, participants engage in morning devotionals, singing, worship and recreational activities. Our volunteer Board of Directors meets throughout the year to evaluate, plan and prepare for our program. COP is funded solely by donations, grants and participant fees.

Poverty in northwestern New Jersey is often hidden. Our clients live in communities that do not recognize their needs. Our clients range from the elderly on fixed incomes, to those with disabled family members and include single parents working hard to make ends meet. In addition to the much-needed repairs, we regularly see our clients refreshed with a new sense of hope. Many interact with youth, sharing their stories of their families and their faith.

COP puts faith into action. Living in Christian community is the basis of our program and we model the teachings of Christ by helping others. We strive for an inclusive community through intergenerational interaction, a broad mix of economic means and people of various ethnicities. We encourage and support our youth volunteers in becoming leaders in their churches and expanding their skill sets.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

COP had a successful program in 2018. We had 38 participants from 8 area churches that were able to repair and renovate homes for 11 families in need in Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties during the last week of June. We are looking forward to and planning for, our 2019 program that runs from June 30 – July 6.

To learn more about the Christian Outreach Project, please visit our website: www.christianoutreachproject.org.

Submitted by,
David Kihm, Executive Director

Christian Unity and Inter-Religious Concerns, Commission on

United Methodists of Greater New Jersey have been functioning to recognize and sensitize the United Methodists to the Christian unity that its members received from their Savior Jesus Christ and continues to support the ecumenical unity and inter-faith relations. We as the members of this conference prayerfully support all the ecumenical bodies such as World Council of Churches, World Methodist Conference and attend the ecumenical meetings in the State of New Jersey as well as in United States of America.

We helped the New Jersey Council of Churches through our funds and sharing our concerns on ecumenical activities of the church as a whole.

We have also recognized the presence of people of other faiths in our midst in gratitude and have enabled United Methodists to see our ecumenical vision through the participation in the ecumenical conferences and meetings. We believe that our ecumenical vision will receive new vitality and energy and grow into meeting the challenges today.

We provided funds for persons to attend the National Workshop on Christian Unity held in early 2018 in Washington D.C. During this event, Eucharistic sharing of different denominations was celebrated.

We are happy with the joint effort of Young Adult Council and Commission of Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concern could secure a scholarship to Ms. Rachel Callender to attend the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey in fall 2019.

We are planning to co-sponsor a lunch-on during conference with the Board of Church and Society and trying to invite a guest speaker.

New Jersey is larger than our church and we believe that the people of other faiths and denominations have a common search for wholeness and perfection. We are called to be a part of an emerging task of mutual trust through conversations and common struggles for justice and peace. New Jersey provides us the greatest opportunity to enter dialogue with people of other faiths in order to build community together and share with them our rich heritage as well as learn from their rich stories.

We continue to support of both the National Council of Churches and the New Jersey Council of Churches.

We continue to work with the Interfaith Dialogue with and in sponsoring smaller, regional lunch-on meetings on specific topics.

We continue to recognize persons and congregations who are active in ecumenical relations through the Bishop's Award for Christian Unity.

Submitted by,
Vijaya Kumar, Chair

CUMAC (Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community)

Thank you to our wonderful friends and partners within the GNJ Annual Conference for your unwavering commitment to CUMAC's mission. Through your support, CUMAC served more people than ever last year and provided thousands of our neighbors with the resources they need to live healthy and hunger-free.

Here are some of last year's highlights:

- Our Food Pantry provided nearly 30,000 people, including over 7,500 children, with monthly groceries to stave off hunger, while an additional 19,000 people received produce and fresh food items
- Our Mobile Pantry ensured that these same foods were available to those living in underserved areas of our community
- Our Depot provided storage space, refrigeration, trucking and resources for over 70 local agencies, schools, soup kitchens, offices and shelters. Over 1.9 million pounds of food were processed for those in need

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

- Our Community Closet supported more than 230 people with disaster relief after experiencing fire, flood, domestic abuse relocation and other hardships
- Through Place of Promise, 10 people had a place to call home and a support system to assist them as they work to overcome years of homelessness and instability
- 35 men and women had the opportunity to learn critical job skills needed to move toward gainful employment through our Pathways to Work program
- 20 local pantries and agencies were supported in their efforts to feed the hungry by the Community Food Coalition

At CUMAC, we are always challenging ourselves to dream big and find better ways to serve our community. With the needs of our neighbors in mind, CUMAC's ministry continues to evolve and grow. This past year has been a whirlwind of activity and our staff is thrilled to be reaching our clients in new and powerful ways.

With 1 in 8 seniors facing hunger in New Jersey, CUMAC revved up its efforts to stop senior hunger in 2018. CUMAC is now partnering with several local adult medical day care centers to provide grocery bags and other essentials to food insecure seniors around our community. Thousands of pounds of resources are being shared monthly, which has allowed hundreds of additional residents to access our services without needing to worry about finding transportation to our pantry.

Along with reaching new, underserved populations, CUMAC took steps to improve services for existing clients in 2018. For the first time in its history, CUMAC conducted formal focus group sessions, helping our staff to better understand the needs of our clients and the challenges they face. The most critical discovery from CUMAC's research was identifying a serious gap in access to healthy food and resources among our clients. To help address these issues, CUMAC recently launched its Beyond Hunger Initiative, which includes 3 major objectives:

- Have a healthy food pantry
- Have an effective job readiness program
- Be a vibrant place to work & receive clients

As part of Beyond Hunger, CUMAC's flagship food pantry is transitioning to a health-focused, choice marketplace. Planning is underway and by later this year, CUMAC's marketplace will resemble a grocery store, where a full array of goods will be displayed and clients will be able to shop for what they need. We anticipate that transitioning to a choice pantry will better equip clients to meet their unique food and nutrition needs.

Additionally, CUMAC is working with the Community Food Bank of New Jersey and the New Jersey Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to upgrade the contents of our grocery bags to promote optimal health among our clients. Going forward, monthly food allocations shared in our pantry will prioritize fresh fruits and vegetables, lean meats, quality proteins, whole grains, low-fat dairy, legumes and other healthy foods. For those living on a tight budget or struggling with food related health issues, these bags will provide them with the items they need to stay healthy and hunger-free. On average, 19,000 people are already receiving surplus produce annually from CUMAC's pantry. Fresh items are procured through a combination of food rescue, purchasing and donations. With a larger, more efficient space, CUMAC will be able to expand healthy food access and assist even more of our neighbors in the months ahead.

Along with making healthy foods more readily available, CUMAC's new marketplace will address health disparities in our area by providing clients access to nutrition education, live food demonstrations, health screenings, resource information and other supportive services. Feeding over 4,000 people every month provides our pantry with the unique opportunity to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of our community. By teaming up with our community partners to offer these clients wraparound services, we will be able to provide our neighbors with the resources they need to build a healthier future.

To further support our community, CUMAC recently relaunched its Pathways to Work program with additional services for those struggling to find gainful employment. Along with job experience and professional development opportunities, Pathways to Work now offers assistance with resume writing, onsite tutoring for GED prep and college readiness, mock interviews, networking options, forklift training and certification and resources to aid participants with their job search. The revamped program has been a tremendous help for community members that are working to jumpstart their careers. We are proud to share that nine of our Pathways participants found full-time positions in 2018 and we are hoping to support even more of our neighbors in the coming year.

These program changes are just a few of the ways CUMAC is becoming a more vibrant place to work and receive clients. To reach our goals of going beyond hunger, we will continue to invest in our team, those we serve and our infrastructure.

In 2018, our staff made efforts to address major facility and equipment needs. The renovation of our warehouse floors, as well as the installation of energy-efficient LED lights, heating units and an industrial-sized humidifier have all made our building a

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

brighter, cleaner, more comfortable place to work. CUMAC also hired two new staff members to fill critical roles in our warehouse operations last year. Both of our new hires are from the local community and bring with them a deep knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced by CUMAC's clientele. Their perspective and influence have been an asset to our team. These improvements to our warehouse assisted in what was our most productive year yet. In 2018, nearly 2 million pounds of food were processed in our Depot, or the equivalent of over 1.5 million meals. Food and other resources were shared with over 70 different community agencies, schools, shelters and soup kitchens.

As our staff works toward our big, crazy dreams and strives to create lasting change in our community, your support remains vital. Throughout 2018, churches of the GNJ Annual Conference showed time and again how committed they are to CUMAC's ministry. 32 Methodist churches sent volunteers, while 98 churches held food drives and other collections, or made financial contributions to support our mission. Bible studies, UMWs, UMMs, youth groups, young adult groups, pastors, lay leaders and congregants alike shared their time, talent and resources to support our shared vision of a future without hunger. They joined hands with local civic groups, corporations, schools and other houses of worship to help make our world a kinder, more loving place for all of God's children. On behalf of our staff and all of our clients, thank you for your incredible dedication and support.

For our friends, old and new, there are many ways to ensure that none among us go hungry this year. Food collections and financial donations are instrumental to ensuring that we are able to provide the best possible care for all of our struggling brothers and sisters. Volunteers are necessary throughout the year to sort food, provide tutoring and to prepare household items. With 1 in 10 people facing hunger, 1 in 7 children, your efforts to organize speaking events and educational opportunities are imperative to keeping hunger awareness alive. Most importantly, your support, in any capacity, helps bring hope and relief to our neighbors who need it most. We simply couldn't help so many without your generosity and care, truly we are blessed to have you as a partner in our mission. Thank you for feeding people and changing lives with us.

CUMAC can be reached by calling 973-742-5518 or e-mailing info@cumacecho.org. Information about our work is available at www.cumac.org, facebook.com/cumacfeedspeople, twitter.com/cumacfeeds or instagram.com/cumacfeeds.

Submitted by,
Adrian Diaz

Drew Theological School, Drew University

Drew University Theological School continued its multi-year self-transformation by launching its new curriculum for the Master of Divinity in the fall of 2018. This entirely reconceived degree seeks to form graduates that are rooted in the Christian story and traditions, capable of effective, adaptive, and creative leadership, and spiritually and socially resourceful for cultivating the transformative gospel of Jesus Christ in, with and for the church and world. A new two-year degree, the Master of Arts in

Theology and Ministry also launched and offers students the opportunity to prepare for public leadership or a specialized vocation through deep theological and ethical reflection informed by biblical, historical, theological and practical sources. New pathways in the Master of Arts, the Master of Sacred Theology and the Doctor of Ministry were also created as part of the curriculum transformation process which seeks to more intentionally focus the school's service to the Church, as well as to the academy and civil society.

Drew welcomed 145 entering students this academic year, its largest entering class in over a decade, with an overall enrollment of 350 for the current academic year.

In the coming year a new 5-year strategic plan will be developed, new degree delivery options that increase accessibility and affordability for prospective students, as well as new partnerships with annual conferences, other church bodies and values-based organizations that share and strengthen Drew's mission to advance peace, justice, love of God, neighbor, and the earth.

Submitted by,
Rev. Dr. Javier Viera, Dean, Theological School

Episcopacy Committee

The Episcopacy Committee met quarterly with Bishop Schol during the past year for the purpose of support, encouragement, communication of Conference priorities and to provide feedback when solicited. We have participated in an evaluation of the Bishop, discussed matters related to the Jurisdictional Committee on Episcopacy and assured that the Episcopal residence is in excellent condition.

At each meeting the Bishop provided a report of his work and goals for the Conference and kept us updated on proposals related to The Way Forward. The Committee has had lively as well as serious discussions of the reports and items brought

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

before the Committee. The Bishop responded candidly to our questions and listened receptively to our expressed opinions. We appreciate his openness and positive example throughout the year.

Submitted by,
Eleanor Hartley, Chair of the Episcopacy Committee

Finance and Administration, Council on

During 2018, in connection with God, our denomination, our conference and our local churches, we were again able to further our work in the name of our Savior Jesus Christ. In partnership with the leadership of Conference, our Bishop and Cabinet, the Council on Finance and Administration has remained focused on insuring financial discipline and effective administration of our conference. Our local churches and congregations have likewise led the support for these efforts by achieving the Shared Ministry collection rate of 88%, which was consistent with the prior year. We were blessed that 389 of our local churches paid 100% of their shared ministry allocation, while 421 paid 100% of their billables. We are grateful to the churches of the Conference for their stewardship and support, together we are accomplishing the work of Christ throughout our conference.

During 2018 we were able to maintain our funding commitments, for our staff and our programs, as well as for our clergy benefit programs. In doing so, we remain committed and focused to continue to achieve our planned long term goals. We have also worked closely with other committees in support of our Strategic Plan, Hope Center developments, as well as further outreach efforts to the communities we serve. In doing so, expenses were well controlled throughout the Conference, allowing our Conference to finish the year achieving all of our financial goals and paying 100% of our General Church apportionments, for the 12th consecutive year.

The year also was marked by continued prudent investment returns, managed in partnership with Wespath Inc., as well as an enviable audit report of 2017, with no significant deficiencies or audit findings. All of the Council's sub committees were efficient and timely in their respective areas, finalizing revisions to our employee manual, developing local programs and insuring prudent management of all of our given resources.

As we begin 2019, we remain empowered by where Christ is leading us, as we consider the challenges post the Special General Conference. During our Special GNJ Conference we were able to propose a revised budget, with reduced spending and apportionments for our local churches. We are working to address key areas of focus, including financial guidelines for clergy, shared resources, as well as relationships with our churches and our staff. Additionally, we recognize the need to remain focused on attaining our current Shared Ministry formula goals and are committed to achieving the goal for the 2019 budget.

As in past years, the efforts of our Treasurer, John Cardillo and his staff have been exemplary, with continued excellence as they have performed their roles. All of our staff remains dedicated to continuing to achieve outstanding results and their work does not go unnoticed. We are blessed by them and are grateful and thankful for the blessings of them in our conference and lives! In closing, on behalf of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, we offer our thanks to Bishop John Schol and the Cabinet for their leadership and support, as together we continue to spread the good news of Our Savior Jesus Christ.

Submitted by,
Robert Dietz, President

First Friends of New Jersey and New York

The mission of First Friends of New Jersey and New York ("First Friends") is to uphold the inherent dignity and humanity of detained immigrants and asylum seekers by providing compassion and hope through volunteer visitation, resettlement assistance and advocacy. In New Jersey, there are approximately 2,200 immigrants and asylum seekers detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") in three county jails (Bergen, Essex, Hudson Counties) and one private facility (Union County). First Friends is the only organization in the

New York metropolitan area that systematically provides services to immigrants incarcerated by ICE.

First Friends provides an array of services for immigrants and asylum seekers who are detained and for those who are released but have no support. Within our Visitation Program, the core of our work, we manage a free hotline for detained immigrants and asylum seekers who are held in immigration custody in New Jersey to provide support and services and connect them with volunteer visitors and pen pals. Through our semiannual Stamp Out Despair Campaign, we provide each of the 2,200 detained immigrants in northern New Jersey with a folder containing a note of welcome and encouragement, First Friends contact information, stationery, greeting cards, plain paper, postage stamps, envelopes and a pen to keep in touch with family and

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

friends. In our Community Supported Post Release Program, we promote the self-sufficiency of immigrants and asylum seekers who are released from detention through services such as transitional housing, transportation, food, clothing, medical care, education, employment services and interpretation/translation services.

As the number of detainees held in New Jersey has grown over the years, including a large number of asylum seekers, so has the demand for our services. In 2018 First Friends supported 295 volunteers who undertook 1,137 hours of visitation at the four detention centers in New Jersey. We could not do this work without the generous support of local Methodist churches throughout our conference and the United Methodist Women.

First Friends, along with Bishop Schol and other Faith Leaders from across New Jersey participated in the prayer rally at the Elizabeth detention center in July 2018 hosted by GNJ's Board of Church and Society and Hispanic/Latino Committee in support of immigrant children who have been separated from their parents.

In January 2019, First Friends welcomed Victor Salama as our new Executive Director. Victor has prioritized strengthening our strategic planning and under his guidance, the First Friends team has created SMART Goals for 2019 that are focused on program, finances, community partnerships and outreach.

To learn more about the mission of First Friends and how you can be a part of this important mission, please visit firstfriendsnjny.org or contact us at info@firstfriendsnjny.org.

Submitted by,
Victor Salama, Executive Director, First Friends NJ/NY

Gateway South Poverty Task Force

The Gateway South Poverty Task Force is a collaborative effort of clergy and lay of the churches of the Gateway South district. Currently we have representation from Magnolia UMC, Memorial UMC (Pine Hill), St. Andrews UMC, 1st UMC (Collingswood), Williamstown UMC, Mt Zion UMC (Lawnside).

In 2017 we decided to focus our efforts on a root cause of poverty and chose literacy. We had a massive book drive where we collected over 2500 books which were sorted and tagged to go out to places where libraries do not exist. The idea of a pop-up library was simple. Take books into areas where people do not have easy access to libraries and allow them to have the books.

We set up in soup kitchens, shelters, on the streets, food pantries and The Neighborhood Center. Currently we have over 2 dozen pop-up library sites and we most recently opened a library in Pine Hill that is stationary. It will serve the community by offering books, computer access and eventually classes on things like resume writing, job searching and tutoring.

Through a collaborative effort with Computer Smiles we have been given 2 computers to assist the community. In the summer of 2018 we launched a pilot program at The Neighborhood Center focusing on literacy. During summer camp we came one day a week for 90 minutes to expose students to reading and related activities. We hope to launch in the afterschool program in Spring 2019 and continue with the summer program and launch one at the Pine Hill site as well in Summer 2019. We continue to find ways to address the challenge of illiteracy that many faces in creative ways.

Submitted by,
Cherese Evans

Global Ministries, Board of

The Conference Board of Global Ministries works with Missionaries, our Advance Specials, Agencies, Conference staff and it also aligns with the strategic goals of GNJC.

Advance Specials: Each Advance Special is assigned to a CBGM member who acts as the liaison with the Board to assure that their ministries continue. Visits with the agency have been planned for Spring 2020. Advance Specials are required to submit a reapplication each year and provide supporting documentation. The list of Advance Specials may be found in the Board's resolution.

Global missions, Conference Secretary (CSGM): In the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference the position of CSGM is held by the Chair of the Board of Global Ministries as well. The CSGM works with the General Board of Global Ministries in accommodating missionaries who will be itinerating in our Conference. In 2018 Princess Jusu, Elizabeth Tapia and Ricardo Ramos itinerated in GNJ.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Isabel Quezada attended the UMC Day of Health in Georgia. This was a three-day event which showcased the innovative projects and programs that many United Methodist churches, organizations, and partners are engaged in. This event also equipped conference health coordinators with tools and resources to aid churches in the establishment and enhancement of health ministries.

We also had the pleasure of Becky Parsons NEJ Mission Advocate, Northeastern Jurisdiction visiting us. Becky met with the Conference Board of Global Ministries and shared good insights to assist us with the work of this committee.

The Conference Board of Global Ministries has met several times during this period to discuss activities for 2020. The committee continues to work towards being more involved in connecting youths and young adults with mission opportunities in our Conference. The committee will also continue to motivate more churches to support Advance Specials.

Submitted by,
Isabel R. Quezada, Chair of the Board of Global Ministries

Higher Education and Ministries, Board of

The Board of Higher Education and Ministries (BHEM) has mandates and responsibilities listed under ¶634 in The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church and is the leadership development agency of The United Methodist Church. Its mission is preparing global leaders for a global church and the world. Every elder, deacon and licensed local pastor benefits from our training and candidacy programs. Many young adults find help in clarifying their vocation and God's call on their lives through our leadership and discernment programs. (gbhem.org)

UM Collegiate Ministries are the missional presence of The United Methodist Church on college and university campuses around the world. Through a network of chaplaincies, Wesley Foundations, ecumenical ministries and church-based ministries, The United Methodist Church reaches more than 1,300 campuses around the world!

We are called to share with our campuses the transformational nature of Christ in a way that raises up a new generation of thoughtful, articulate Christians who care about making the world a better place. While this calling looks and feels very different across our campuses, it is central to our identity and it compels us to provide intentional, student-led ministries that reach this emerging generation of leaders. (gbhem.org)

The Board of Higher Education and Ministries of GNJ has been experiencing positive structural changes within our Annual Conference and along with coaching provided by Ministry Architects, Inc. we can say that this year has been an innovative, creative and transformational one as we become one of the components of Next Gen Ministries under the new strategic plan and under the leadership of the Executive Director of Next Gen Ministries, Eric Drew. This year we are journeying alongside Young Adults Ministries, Camping Ministries and Ignite discerning ways in which we can reach the younger generation to continue to make disciples that make disciples across GNJ and beyond.

We are so grateful for the support provided by the GNJ Conference leadership and staff and GNJ congregations for the many opportunities we have to develop leaders through financial and human resources, trainings and leadership development. In return, BHEM provides GNJ with skilled, talented and gifted leaders that serve our young people acknowledging them as leaders today while preparing them for tomorrow's generation and missional opportunities.

Every year BHEM encourages the participation of clergy and laity in the search for a recipient of the Francis Asbury Award (non-monetary award). This award recognizes those who encourage and support higher education and campus ministries within the United Methodist Church. It is for all clergy or lay, employed or volunteer, who are active in supporting, strengthening and promoting higher education ministries.

In 2018 our agency received 71 scholarship applications from high school and college students pursuing undergrad studies, of which forty were submitted with all the required documentation and signatures on or before the deadline. We met as a board to review the application, the process and the list of requirements for the scholarships and improve the wording to clarify the application instructions. In the review process we were presented with the opportunity by the GNJ Communications Department to provide students with an online scholarship application that would be submitted electronically. We are pleased to inform that as of the date of this report we have not had any inquiries regarding the process. Out of the forty applications, 28 scholarships were awarded; all over \$500 each.

As always, students inspire us with their letters in which they share their academic, spiritual, and community outreach goals. Pastors, mentors and church leaders share in their recommendation letters the many ways that the applicants are active in the life of the church and the community, making disciples and serving one another in the exemplary love of Jesus.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Board of Higher Ed and Ministry of GNJ provides campus ministers and chaplains with grants that assist in promoting their campus ministries, outreach opportunities for and to students, mission, service and staffing. This year we will be providing coaching opportunities for chaplains and campus ministers, workshops and retreats to bridge relationships and enhance creativity amongst each other. We currently have identified three campuses with the potential to become our newest campus ministries in the next two years!

An Agency Grant Fund Application is completed every year and submitted for approval. The approved 2018 grant funded the following campuses:

- Rockland County Community College, John Kwon
- Centenary University, Timothy Nicinski
- Wesley Foundation/Princeton University, Erik "Skitch" Matson
- Kingston University/Feed Truck, Jessica Winderweedle,
- Rutgers University, Joseph Jueng (This is GNJ's newest campus ministry! Have you seen the video the Communications Department has put together? Check it out at GNJ website.)

Once a year members of our board meet with our campus ministers and chaplains to listen to their stories, bright spots, challenges and the impact they are experiencing in their campuses. From conversations we learned that they are engaging with the college and university communities in worship, Bible studies volunteering in the community food banks and community projects. They are launching ministries and mission initiatives, providing meals to the community and to students on campus, sharing meals in fellowship, connecting with the community in relationships and bridging opportunities, partnering with other organizations, holding ecumenical events and providing and creating safe spaces for students where powerful questions are asked and every student is heard. Our campuses are led by leaders that dream, envision, promote connection and deepen relationships.

Your continued prayers and support for our campuses, ministers and chaplains; our board members, and our conference youth and leaders will be greatly appreciated!

Submitted by,
Iraida Ruiz de Porras, Chair

Hispanic/Latino Ministry, National Plan for

The National Plan for Hispanic-Latino Ministries Committee in GNJ vision is to help the Hispanic-Latino congregations to contextualize the GNJ Strategic Plan, vision and mission. We are not only rooted in our faith and Wesleyan traditions but also in our cultures and heritage knowing that, with these, we enriched GNJ along with others and bring the gift of diversity and multiculturalism. We all together following a call and a dream, to reflect the image of Christ and to help build the Kingdom of God here as part of GNJ.

Leadership Development

SELAH- (Hispanic/Latino Theological and Leadership Development Training Center). The mission of SELAH is to equip disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world; It's purpose is recruit and develop transformational leaders for the church of the 21st century by providing theological and practical ministry and leadership development education in the Wesleyan tradition. We have been working on SELAH's new curriculum, recruiting and selecting teachers who will be part of the faculty and organizing the administration team.

Support to Children and Youth Ministry

Every year we support the Hispanic/Latino Children and Youth Retreat called "Niños y Jovenes para Cristo" that usually takes place at Pinelands Center. In 2018, we offered scholarships to 80 campers and 20 scholarships to help Hispanic Latino youth to participate at Barefoot Republic Camp. We also sent 3 young adults to participate in HYL A (Hispanic Youth Leadership Academy)

Support to Walk to Emmaus

We continue to support the ministry of Walk to Emmaus. This is a highly effective resource that provides spiritual formation for people to become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Where more than 100 Hispanic-Latino men and women had the opportunity to not only have a transformational spiritual experience but many of them also have found clarity in Gods calling for their life and ministry.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Support to Mission U

As part of our commitment with leadership development this year we offered scholarships for 7 adults, 4 children and 2 youth to participate at the Mission u 2018.

Support to MARCHA

This year we helped support MARCHA (Methodist Associated Representing the Causes of Hispanic Americans). For more than 46 years, MARCHA has enlisted its constituency in the critical work of giving voice to the concerns that significantly impact the Hispanic/Latino members of the United Methodist Church and the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico. MARCHA is an instrument of advocacy and support in favor of Hispanic / Latino Americans to ensure that the contributions and cultural values of Hispanic / Latinos are appreciated in the Church and society. MARCHA advocates on behalf of Hispanics / Latinos inside and outside the Church, provides training for its members, churches and walks in solidarity with the peoples of Latin America and other groups.

We Care

The NPHLM GNJ in collaboration with the Board of Church and Society, other committees of GNJ and agencies organized an interfaith prayer vigil at the Elizabeth Detention Center in Elizabeth NJ where more than 200 people were present to pray, sing and declare our love and concern for those who are being held at the detention center and those affected by the family separation policies at the border.

Events to Strengthen Unity Among Our Clergy and Laity

At Annual Conference we celebrated many accomplishments in the Hispanic community in GNJ including the Esperanza para PR initiative. We had the opportunity and the honor to have Bishop Ortiz from PR to be our speaker and shared with us in more detail some of the work and needs of our brothers and sisters in PR and how we can help.

Tools for Church Vitality

- Four Hispanic/Latino congregations got involved in Team Vital in 2018.
- We continue to work in collaboration with Next Generation to support youth and young adult's ministry in our context.
- Organize workshops about cultural competence, and support our pastors serving in cross-cultural appointments.

Submitted by,
Waleska Trinidad, Chair

Laity, Board of

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. Ephesians 4.11-13

The mission of the Conference Board of Laity is to enable laity to have full and equal partnerships with clergy and within the Conference, work with the Conference to grow lay leadership and provide lay opportunities for growth. The Board helps develop principled spiritual leaders for the Church and works as the Catalyst for Laity Leadership Education, Lay Servant Ministries, Laity Session at Annual Conference, Laity Leadership Academy, Lay Ministry Recognition, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men and the work of the District Lay Leaders. As a board we continually look at ways to grow the laity of GNJAC in the understanding and interpretation of God's word to be equipped as effective leaders in sharing the gospel with other people.

The Laity Board is in partnership with our local churches and all of our activities are directed towards improving the ministry together. Encouraging the lay leadership to grow and make time for education so that we become more equipped to do the work of ministry in a complementary role with our clergy leaders. We are seeing a major move of the Holy Spirit within the Church right now as we identify, equip, encourage and fulfill God's purposes and call for each of us in the local church. We have witness in our yearly Lay Ministry Recognition Program each April, as numbers of applications and attendance increases. Lay recognition program provides an opportunity for our laity to witness how God is embracing and working in the ministry of the local church.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Re-structuring of the Laity Education Umbrella is only in the infant stage of our five-year plan as the Laity Board works with Rev. Juel Nelson to improve and align Laity Education. The goal: To launch a congregational leadership development ministry in September 2019 that is seamless, builds on applied learning, shapes and supports congregational leaders to lead with excellence and achieves growth in the five markers of vitality.

Provide educational opportunities for Five Competencies of Congregational Leadership:

1. Spiritual Servant Leadership
2. Cultural Competency
3. Leadership through Change and Conflict
4. Emotional Intelligence
5. Narrative Leadership through Storytelling

Providing a Biblical foundation for raising up disciples who serve as leaders, managers, lay ministers, prayer warriors and storytellers is the base of the processes of aligning Laity Education with the 2019 Strategic plan. All persons in the conference will have equal opportunity to be equipped, whether for lifelong learning or certification, resources will be available to the laity. The Laity Board continue the mission of advocacy, equipping and effectively deploying and supporting the local church leaders for ministry.

Submitted by,
Rosa Williams, GNJ Lay Leader

Laity Leadership Goals

Leadership Goals

1. The Laity Board will monitor and ensure that lay representation at Annual Conference 2016-2020 is equal in membership in accordance with the GNJAC Rules of Order/ Book of Discipline. At Large Members will agree to be faithful to process and committed in attendance to Annual Conference and reporting to local congregation.
2. The Laity Leadership Academy will continue to work to create a culture of learning in which laity throughout the Annual Conference will have an opportunity to become engaged, equipped and empowered to be effective partners with each other and their clergy partners to lead the church and reach the community as disciples of Jesus Christ.
3. The Laity Board will continue to celebrate the ministry of faithful laity with a format called Lay Ministry Recognition. This program recognizes a person or group that has been creative and innovative in transforming lives and making disciples of Jesus Christ. This is for resource sharing and encouraging congregations in their ministries. The Laity Board will choose ministries from each district to be highlighted in April each year, at the United Methodists of GNJ Mission and Resource Center.
4. The Laity Board will work with the Connectional Ministry Team and District Superintendents to ensure Christian leaders are offered vital and vibrant educational programs that develop:
 - a. fruitful and transformational leaders
 - b. communication and interpersonal skills
 - c. passionate faith and biblical understanding
 - d. 100 laity who make disciples who make disciples (Leadership 100)
 - e. missional mindset that connects with the community

Submitted by,
Rosa Williams, GNJ Lay Leader

Native American Ministry, Committee on

We continue to work on getting our Native youth and children involved in the church and community. This year, we had seven Native young people attend the IGNITE event and four youth attend the Peg Leg Flamingo event, a UM Native American Leadership Program. We also are happy to announce the third year of operation for the Native American Youth Club at the Bridgeton High School. Since our youth are becoming more aware of the Church, we are now training them to be involved. Five young adults were trained to be teacher aides for the St. John UMC After School program in September.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We were informed that the Nanticoke-Lenni Lenape Tribe had lost their state recognition status. The Conference became a Friend of the Court and with this and other support, the Tribe received back their state recognition. This support enabled the Tribe to apply for funds and for their members to use that status for employment opportunities.

Some of our Native people were put in boarding schools and it still has affected them and their following generations. We therefore were a part of the Boarding School Healing Coalition event in Carlisle, PA in October. We have also been involved in the work of the NEJ Native American Ministries Committee. Through such connections, we are able to share resources through our webpage on the conference website.

We will continue to work on ways to share information about Native American Ministries Sunday; to work with the Nanticoke-Lenni Lenape, Ramapough and Powhatan Tribal communities and look at ways to keep the conference informed about Native American issues and concerns through the Digest and Relay.

Submitted by,
Cynthia Kent, Chair

Next Generation Ministries

God is doing amazing things in GNJ! Next Gen Ministries continue to cultivate and catalyze the next generation of enthusiastic disciples of Jesus Christ who connect, grow and lead their congregations and communities for the transformation of the world. Since GNJ approved the Next Gen Strategic Plan in 2017, we have witnessed God using our Next Gen Ministries to change many students' lives, impact churches with creative energy and transform communities across GNJ, especially:

Camping Ministry

- In 2018, 1,971 students and adults experienced God's Creation at Pinelands Center through camps, retreats and educational programs.
- 2018 summer camps saw nearly 200 students experience God's love and creation at Pinelands.
- Pinelands has prepared to host 25 events in the 2019-2020 season.
- In 2019, Next Gen will award over \$50,000 in scholarships for summer camps.
- 8 out of 10 innovative offerings for youth and young adults have been offered or planned.
- The 2019 Summer Camp budget is balanced, including over \$200,000 of facilities upgrades.

IGNITE/Youth Ministry

- 1,300 youth attended IGNITE 2018 and participated in local GNJ mission work. The 2020 goal is 2,500. In 5 years, over 5,000 students and leaders from 185 churches attended IGNITE.
- Since IGNITE 2014, over 2,000 have responded to a call to discipleship in Christ.
- 50 out of 100 youth have served and learned in leadership development and internships.
- Over 100 out of 150 congregations with youth ministries and a leader connected.

Campus Ministry

- 3 out of 3 campus young adult faith communities have begun.
- 20 out of 25 young adults have served and learned in the Mosaic program.
- Since launching Next Gen in May 2017, over \$150,000 has been invested in 6 campus ministries.

Communication/Network:

- Over 1,800 people connected to Next Gen programs and resources in the database.
- Over 500 Next Gen leaders receive updates and resources through the monthly newsletter.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

With joy we welcomed Eric Drew as the Executive Director of our Next Gen Ministries. He is a true champion for our Next Gen Ministries and is already making a big difference in our work.

As a vital mission partner of GNJAC, we have added to our relationship with GNJ that Next Generation Ministries of GNJ, Inc. will follow the Human Resources Policies of GNJ.

We are grateful to our out-going good and faithful board members (Rev. Hector Burgos, Rev. Sang Won Doh, Yvette Long and Rev. Ron Smith). Our deep thanks to our Next Gen Board members, Ryan Clements, Carla Vanzant and all the staff and leaders of GNJ for their dedicated leadership.

In Next Generation Ministries, we're so grateful to serve alongside and support local churches in their ministry. We would love for you to join us as we live out our mission through Connect, Grow and Lead:

- Connect with God and each other through IGNITE, Next Gen Summer Camps, Campus Ministry;
- Grow in faith and leadership through Retreats, Learning Cohorts, and Internships; and
- Lead as AC Delegates, Mission Catalysts, and Youth/Young Adult Council Members.

We thank you for your enthusiastic support for the Next Gen Ministries. Your support for this vital mission is the best investment you are making for our present and future generations. Thanks be to God!

Submitted by,
Eric Drew, Executive Director of Next Gen Ministries

Pension and Health Benefits, Board of

The Greater New Jersey Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits (the Board) is authorized by The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church to contribute to the support, relief, assistance and pensioning of clergy and their families, as well as other church workers and lay employees of the United Methodist Church.

Working with the Wespath Benefits and Investments, the Board endeavors to implement and interpret national and conference policy.

Pension

Pre-1982 Pension Plan

The 2019 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment is \$685 per year of pre-1982 service. The 2020 Past Service Annuity Rate for pre-1982 annuitant payment will be \$699. The pre-1982 pension program continues to be fully funded and in a strong position.

CRSP/MPP and CPP

The General Conference's pension plan, Clergy Retirement Security Program (CRSP) is a hybrid of defined benefit and defined contribution approaches which took effect in 2007. For 2019 churches pay CRSP at 12.5% of clergy plan compensation and for the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) at 3% of clergy's plan compensation, and UMLife Options at 2% of plan compensation for ½ time clergy.

The 2012 General Conference enacted changes to the Clergy Retirement Security Program. Effective 1/1/2014 for all contributions going forward, the CRSP Defined Benefit component was reduced from 1.25% of DAC to 1.0% of DAC. Under the CRSP Defined Contribution component, contributions were reduced from 3% to 2% of clergy plan compensation and, in addition, match up to 1% of compensation if clergy contributes 1% to UMPIP. Contributions previously made will not be affected by this change and benefits paid upon retirement will be based on the previous formula for all benefits accrued prior to 1/1/2014. Any benefits accrued from that date forward is based on the new formula.

Additionally, the General Conference changed the participation requirements from all clergy under appointment to only clergy under full time appointment. Clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2-time) are eligible based on the decision of the Annual Conference after approval of the Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits. The Board has voted to include those clergy appointed to less-than-full-time (3/4 and 1/2 time) appointments in CRSP. For clergy appointed to 1/4-time appointments, a vote of the Board has made UMPIP available as a pension option for those clergy. Please contact Alexa Taylor,

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, for more information on this option. These changes require Annual Conference approval.

The rates of remittance for the Clergy Retirement Security Program/Ministerial Pension Plan (CRSP/MPP) and Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP) increased from last year's rates to 91.91% and 99.82% respectively. Eighteen percent of churches were unable to pay these bills on time. Below is a summary of 2018 remittances:

Type	Remittances		
Rate	2018 Shortfall	# of Churches Paying	
< 100%	% of Churches Paying		
< 100%			
CRSP	91.91%	\$208,465	101 18.36
CPP	99.82%	\$16,965	

To maintain clergypersons' participation in CRSP/UMPIP and CPP/UMLife Options, the Greater New Jersey Conference fully pays delinquent church accounts using funds from the Reserve Account at Wespath Benefits and Investments. We are concerned that some churches are not fully meeting their obligations with the resulting decrease in the Reserve Account.

By 2018 year-end the cumulative delinquent amount for years prior to 2018 was \$2,317,000 for CRSP/MPP and \$444,000 for CPP - a total of \$2,761,000, an increase of \$313,000.

We thank those churches that maintained faithful stewardship, paying 100% of their obligation. We also appreciate the continuing efforts of our district superintendents, Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, to collect the past due balances. More than \$174,000 of the 2002-2017 shortfalls was collected in 2018.

Pre-Retirement Seminars

As in years past, the Board sponsored a retirement education session held at the Mission and Resource Center of Greater NJ on February 28, 2019. The pre-retirement seminar focuses on those anticipating retirement within five years. Sixty persons were scheduled to attend. Presentations by Robert Christophel of Wespath Benefits and Investments and a Social Security representative provided valuable guidance to assist retirement planning. Special thanks go to Jennifer Cho for organizing this event. Thanks also to Alexa Taylor, Insurance and Benefits Services Manager, for assisting and providing support.

Health Insurance

For 2019, the Board continued Active health insurance under HealthFlex, the health insurance plan sponsored by the Wespath Benefits and Investments. The medical provider network is Blue Cross/Blue Shield PPO; the pharmacy benefits are provided through OptumRx. Beginning in 2015, Wespath no longer offers retiree health insurance. The Board implemented United HealthCare's National Medicare Advantage PPO Plan which combines the participants' Medicare A & B, supplemental coverage and Part D prescription plan.

The Board has again provided a contribution to participants' Health Reimbursement Accounts for 2019 of \$1,250 for single and \$2,500 for all other plan types which can be used for qualifying medical expenses (such as co-pays and deductibles). These funds do not expire and are accessed through a MasterCard branded debit card, or via a reimbursement form.

Premiums and Remittances

The following chart shows church premium rates in effect for 2019. These rates reflect a Cabinet- requested blended rate for all categories, which the Board has been moving toward for several years, so that health insurance premiums are not a factor in determining clergy appointments.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Health Insurance Premiums for 2019

Employee \$15,000

Employee & Child(ren) \$15,000

Employee & Spouse \$15,000

Employee & Family \$15,000

The Board thanks all churches that fully paid their health insurance premiums in 2018. Overall, churches paid 98% of the total \$3,953,256 health insurance billings, an increase from the 2017 remittance rate of 96%. The 2018 shortfall was approximately \$41,000. By 2018-year end, the amount owed from years prior to 2018 had been reduced by \$237,038 and the cumulative unpaid health insurance bills had increased to \$3,321,754 owed for years prior to 2018.

Churches failing to fully pay their premiums burden all churches and result in higher health insurance premiums for all. Thanks go to the Conference/BOPHB Treasurer John Cardillo, Benefits Assistant Veronika Varga and the Cabinet for their continued efforts to collect health insurance arrearages.

The Board and the Conference staff have continued their efforts to ease the continued transitions in healthcare. The Health Insurance Guidelines included in these 2019 Conference Reports and Recommendations have been updated.

Annuitant Health Care Liability

As of the end of 2017, the Financial Accounting Standards Board FAS 158 liability for annuitant healthcare costs in the amount of \$65 million was posted to the Conference balance sheet. This liability is the estimated present value of the future costs of annuitant healthcare. The Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund described below has been set up to address this large liability over time.

Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund

In 2002-2003 the Board, recognizing the growing magnitude of annuitant healthcare costs, together with the Centenary Fund, representatives of CFA, the Cabinet and the Association of Retired Ministers and Spouses (ARMS), developed a plan for a long-term Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund that begins to offset the liability and ensure that retirees continue to enjoy conference-paid health insurance. The Fund was initiated by the 2003 GNJ Annual Conference and earmarked exclusively for healthcare costs for annuitants to cover higher premium costs expected in future years. The plan for the Fund involves a multi-year period during which excess pre-1982 retirement funds would be used to pay CRSP defined-benefit requirements and comparable funds from churches would be used to create a permanent retiree health fund. This is a critical initiative since it is clear that the Conference cannot continue to fund retiree health insurance on a cash basis out of the Conference Budget.

As of December 31, 2018, the Annuitant Health Insurance Contingency Fund held a balance of \$5,531,132 after transferring \$1,160,726 to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account to avoid a negative balance in that account at year-end. In 2018 approximately \$1,076,000 came into the Contingency Fund (representing the 2% clergy and staff salary contributions toward the cost of health insurance) plus the Centenary Fund's annual contribution (in excess of \$300,000, separate from their \$100,000 contribution directly to the Annuitant Health Insurance Account).

The Board Itself

The Conference Board of Pension and Health Benefits endeavors to serve the Conference and the needs of those in ministry. There continues to be much to accomplish, especially in the challenging field of health insurance. Christ strengthens us to meet these challenges and we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire our actions.

Current leadership is Rev. Dr. William B. Wilson, Sr., Chair; Rev. Dr. Jennifer Cho, Vice Chair; Rev. William Williams III, Secretary

Submitted by,
William B. Wilson, Sr., Chair

Religion and Race, Commission on (CORR)

The GNJ Commission on Religion and Race (GNJ CORR) advances the mandate of the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR). GCORR is the core agency within the United Methodist Church tasked with empowering the Church to pursue racial equity and cultural competency to build a stronger, more vibrant UMC." GNJ CORR is charged with this same task in the Greater New Jersey Conference (GNJ) by promoting full and equal participation of the racial and ethnic constituency in the total life and

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

mission of the church, GNJ CORR seeks to empower clergy and laity to develop transformational leaders and vital congregations.

Appreciation is extended to the members and volunteers of GNJ CORR for their diligent work. Bonnie Harley, Laura Lin and Rev. Brian Joyce often work behind the scenes, editing, organizing and making space. Thank you.

GNJ CORR 2018 activities included:

- Co-hosted the 2018 Annual Focus Group Dinner 50 Years after the Abolishment of the Central Jurisdiction: Looking at Race in the United Methodist Church. Dr. Morris Davis, professor of Methodist History at Drew University, racial justice advocate, critical researcher in the politics of the UMC in the Jim Crow era and author of *The Methodist Unification: Christianity and the Politics of Race in the Jim Crow Era*, was the key note speaker. The event was very well attended and received positive feedback. Special thanks to Rev. Kathleen Stone for her leadership with this event and the diligent work of the Co-hosts: Church and Society, Ethnic Local Church Concern and Black Methodists for Church Renewal.
- Supported and co-sponsored legislation, as a member of the Connectional Table, participation in the law suit with Bishop Schol signing as our Bishop and representative of United Methodist congregations in GNJ, which seeks to advocate for a more just education system in NJ that provides equitable educational opportunities to all students. 2018 marked 64 years after the holding in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. It is time to address all segregation that results in lack of access, equity and justice for Black and Latino students.
- Attended Facing the Future 2018: In the Midst of the Storm a conference hosted by the General Commission on Religion and Race for pastors in Cross Racial Cross/Cross Cultural [CR/CR] appointments. To be celebrated and commended is Rev. Teresita Matos-Post who rendered deeply moving reflections, of being appointed to a CR/CC site, from the vantage point of a Puerto Rican woman pastor. Her reflections touched all who serve in CR/CC sites as well as, highlighted the complex intersectionality of race, ethnicity, gender and religious expression. In the follow-up event to the conference, I hosted an Online Open Space Addressing Stress and Mental Health for Clergy in CR/CC Appointments.
- Completed curriculum *Christianity, Race and US Law* which reviews the intersection, influence and practice of the Christian religion, race and the development of US law as it is related to race, racism and marginalization and/or liberation of racial/ethnic groups. The goal is to understand how past actions have influenced the modern church and to think about methods of effective ministry to heal and make whole a church that has been divided along racial ethnic lines. We will pay particular attention to the influence and activism of Methodism. This curriculum is available online or in print. It was designed to be used with PaCE groups but can be used for small group or individual study.
- Completed design of the DNA Discussion Project. GNJ CORR will host a DNA Discussion Group in 2019.

GNJ CORR looks forward to continuing to serve GNJ through training, consultation, research and advocacy to empower clergy and laity to be able to be an effective witness for Christ in a diverse world. As we move forward in 2019-2020, we will focus our efforts on supporting CR/CC sites, providing educational resources and making accessible the work that GNJ CORR has completed during the last quadrennial.

Submitted by,
Vanessa M. Wilson, Chair

Status and Role of Women, Commission On (COSROW)

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) serves to bring about the full inclusion of women in the life of The United Methodist Church. Our charge is to challenge the church to “continuing commitment to the full and equal responsibility and participation of women in the total life and mission of the church.” With this commitment, The United Methodist Church affirms itself as “part of the universal church, rooted in the liberating message of Jesus Christ, that recognizes every person, woman or man, as a full and equal part of God’s human family (The 2016 Book of Discipline, ¶ 2102)

It is a great joy that I have been able to serve continually with dedicated team members throughout the past year. GNJ COSROW carried out its purpose through the following projects: (1) COSROW Award: The person selected to receive Helenor Alter Davisson Award for 2019 from GNJ Commission on the Status and Role of Women is Rev. Dr. Eunice Vegas-Perez. (2) Leadership Development: 7 women leaders in GNJ attended Do No Harm Conference 2018. (3) Display Table at The Annual Conference to promote the ministry of COSROW and provide resources for its mission goals. (4) Women’s History Month in March: We provide worship resources to celebrate Women’s History Month. Furthermore, we are planning to offer Sexual Ethics Training/Workshop for all of the pastors entering into pastoral ministry in GNJ. We are working on a written proposal to require a mandatory sexual ethics training/workshop for all pastors who are newly entering and actively serving in GNJ.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

As you are aware, the two Amendments that sought to claim language that both women and men are created in the image of God, that committed our church to work for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, and that sought to assure an equal place in the life, worship, and governance of the local church for women, did not receive the two-thirds necessary vote from each annual conference, which was needed for ratification of the decision of General Conference.

These two unpassed Amendments motivate us to continue to seek to raise awareness of ways in which women are not fully included in the life of the church and to spark new recognition and ways of being women in the church. We recommit ourselves to inspire new women leaders to find their places in not just our church, but in the large community as well.

Lastly, I would like to give thanks to our members for their faithful work: Sarah Borgstrom Lee, Esther Canty-Barnes, Lakesha Groover, Judy Hopkins, Marilyn Hughes, Iraida Ruiz De Porras, Eunice Vega-Perez, Yoomi Yi, and Regina Yeske (Conference liaison).

Submitted by,
Michelle Ryoo, Chair

Trustees, Board of

The Officers of the Board are: Chairperson – Rev. Clifford Still; Vice-Chairperson – Rev. James Ryoo; Secretary – Mary Beth Scherer. The following Trustees serve as liaisons to the properties for which the Board is responsible: Ed Bowen, Judy Hopkins, Jack Green, Rev. David Lehmkuhl, Rev. Rupert Hall, Sang Chul Shin, Tracy Estes and Erik Lenander.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance/care of the following properties: Episcopal residence, nine District parsonages, the previous Palisades District parsonage situated in Harrington Park, NJ, the land in Paterson, NJ, as well as the Conference Office building. Additionally, they oversee the actions needed to be taken in reference to churches and parsonages that have been closed, representative of formal action taken at prior Annual Conferences. Five cemeteries are also under the care of Trustees.

Some items of note as a result of Trustee action taken during the 2019 Conference Year:

- Six of the closed churches have been sold in accordance with the Annual Conference action leaving 11. The original number was 25.

The Trustees are privileged to work with and receive the cooperation of, many individuals and groups throughout the Conference. The counsel which is offered to the Board from Conference Chancellors Lynn Catterson, Esq. and Sanford Brown, Esq. is invaluable. John Cardillo, Conference Treasurer and Director of Administrative Services serves as Treasurer of the Board. Beverly Schol, Property Manager and Lida DeNardo, Property Administrative Assistant serve as staff liaisons to the Board. As a result of their guidance and expertise in reference to overall financial resources of the GNJAC and specifically the funds which the Board oversees, the Trustees are better equipped to prioritize and responsibly address the needs of the various properties. The Conference Trustees are also grateful for the opportunity to work more closely with Bishop Schol and the Cabinet during this Conference year.

Submitted by,
Cliff Still, President

United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey

Vision: To enable individuals, congregations and Conference mission organizations experience the joy of generosity and facilitate the generation of increased financial resources to make new disciples, provide inspiring worship opportunities, grow faith groups and engage disciples in mission to the community.

Mission: The Foundation enables disciple making, increased congregational vitality and community mission engagement by assisting congregations and mission organizations grow their financial assets by providing stewardship resourcing and investment opportunities.

Officers of the Board of Trustees: President – Vasanth K. Victor (Laity), Secretary – William Markert (Laity), Treasurer – John Cardillo (Conference Staff)

Board Members: Jay Gerken (Laity), Roxy Hammett (Laity), David Montanye (Clergy)

Brief History: Created in 1992 by action of the 135th Session of the Northern Annual Conference, with the first investment made by the Conference. In 2000, became the UMF of Greater NJ after the merger of the Southern and Northern Conferences.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Wespath Investment Management became the Investment Manager in August 2015. As of the end of 2017, the amount of investment in the foundation was \$44.3 MM.

Developments in 2018: The focus of the Foundation is three-fold – to increase conference wide fund raising especially by providing planned giving opportunities; to resource congregations encouraging commitment to a 12-month Stewardship Plan; to provide sustainable investment opportunities for congregations and conference mission organizations.

Foundation staff were hired to complete the team – Michaela Murray Nolan as Director of Development and Cristel Ramirez as Administrative Assistant.

Jana Purkis Brash (Executive Director) offered over 25 presentations at churches throughout the Conference explaining the work of the Stewardship Foundation.

As of the end of January 2019 the investment balance invested with the Foundation totaled \$44 MM despite the decline in the stock market.

Plans and Goals for 2019: In 2018 we set a goal of offering Donor Advised Funds to increase our Planned Giving capabilities. This opportunity will be available to donors in April.

We initiated a new service to local churches of offering Legacy (Estate) Planning Seminars.

The Stewardship Foundation is also managing the Miracles Everywhere Campaign. We are available to assist congregations in running the campaign.

Submitted by,
Vasanth K. Victor, Chair

United Methodist Women

The life of GNJUMW continues to be busy with details and depth of work in the areas of social justice. The four foci for the quadrennial 2016-2020, as established by the National Office of United Methodist Women, include the following: Criminalization of Communities of Color with an emphasis on breaking the School to Prison Pipeline, Economic Inequality, Climate Justice, and Maternal and Child Health. Each Conference of UMW has been asked to focus on one of these areas for the rest of the quadrennial. We have chosen to have programs around the issue of Maternal and Child Health, as impacted by other factors such as the School to Prison Pipeline and Immigration.

Following up on these themes, our GNJUMW Spring Meeting was entitled Maternal and Child Health and Wellbeing, held on April 7, 2018 at St. Andrews UMC, Cherry Hill. The sermon, Amazing Jesus was delivered by Rosa Williams. Moselle Jules, a participant in Mission of Peace trip to Cuba that we helped sponsor, gave an overview of the daily life and culture of Cuba. One of the program speakers was Tricia Yeo, Program Manager of Health and Wellness for the Food Bank of Southern Jersey. Her talk focused on Maternal and Child Health Challenges to Better Outcomes. Esther Canty-Barnes, Esq., Director of the Education and Health Law Clinic and Clinical Professor of Law, Rutgers School of Law, followed and gave a presentation entitled “Maternal and Child Challenges to Better Outcomes.”

We worked on several resolutions this year for the GNJUM Conference, including the following: Resolution to Facilitate A Way Forward, sponsored by Susan Zahorbenski, Diaconal Minister and RV District UMW President; Resolution to Oppose Human Trafficking and Help End Suicide and Homelessness Among Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth, submitted by the GNJUMW Leadership Team; and Resolution to Help End Youth Suicide, submitted by the GNJUMW Leadership Team.

We also endorsed the resolution on Segregation in New Jersey Schools submitted by the Connectional Table, whose goal was to join in a complaint against the State of New Jersey in order to end segregation in the public school system. (New Jersey ranks 6th for black students and 7th for Latinos as far as being one of the most segregated school system in the nation.)

We continued, as a Leadership Team, to work throughout the GNJUM Conference to educate all 9 districts of UMW on The Way Forward. Through the work of Kathy Schulz, Yvonne Bouknight, Pat Schutz and Marilyn Powell, we were able to visit our districts and provide an educational background surrounding the issue of homosexual marriage and the ordination of LBGTO persons as part of the UM Church, along with a discussion of the proposals for consideration by the Council of Bishops.

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

We also partnered with Tom Lank, head of the GNJUMC to the special General Conference to be held in February 2019, to discuss the recommendations of the Council of Bishops and other recommendations from various UM bodies and churches that have been made to bring some type of closure to this issue.

In May, over 60 women from the GNJUMW attended the UMW Assembly 2018 held in Columbus, Ohio, May 17-May 20th with some 6000 other UM Women from all over the country and the world! The theme of this Assembly was The Power of Bold. I was thrilled to be joined at Assembly by Dorothy Scott, Assistant Director of the Neighborhood Center in Camden, NJ.

I personally was able to participate in an Ubuntu Day of Service at the Lincoln Park Elementary School where I was charged to help plant a summer vegetable garden with the students who were in their Freedom School program, directed by Darlene Scheid of the UMC and Community Development for All People.

35 student scholars and 35 United Methodist Women participated in this event. Assembly was more than the Ubuntu Day of Service! We demonstrated at the State Capital building to support A Living Wage 4 All. We went on to have inspiring sessions that dealt with the full array of issues from Maternal and Child Health, the School to Prison Pipeline, Climate Justice and A Living Wage 4 All.

One of the sessions that I attended was on the Palestinian Issue in Israel, with an emphasis on a peaceful co-existence rather than the current stand-off and subjugation of the Palestinians. Featured speakers in the plenary worship services included Leymah Gbowee, who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for helping end the Second Liberian Civil War in 2003 and Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund and author of *The Sea is So Wide and my Boat is So Small*.

During July, the GNJUMW joined forces with GNJUMC to present the annual Mission u program held July 13-15 at Georgian Court University, Lakewood and July 21 at Calvary Korean UMC, East Brunswick. In addition to offering What About Our Money, as the featured UMW new course, the GNJUMC sponsored When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor.

July 28th we participated in the We Care Prayer Vigi to advocate for immigrants' family reunification co-sponsored by the GNJUMW, MARCHA GNJ-National Plan, GNJ Board of Church and Society and the GNJ Immigration Task Force. Over 100 persons, including all races and all ages, gathered at 10:00 a.m. at the ICE Elizabeth Detention Center to protest in a non-violent way the separation of immigrant children and their parents at the border with Mexico. We were lead in song and prayer by Bishop John Schol of GNJUMC, Javier Viera, Dean of the Drew Theological School, Grace Pugh Hubbard, the music leader for GNJUMW and Harriet Jane Olson, CEO of United Methodist Women.

The Neighborhood Center, Camden, NJ had a fundraising event at the Travistock Country Club on October 13, 2019. Millie Grey and I attended the Evening in Paris dinner party and silent auction event to raise money for the teen program sponsored by the Neighborhood Center. It was inspiring to see many of the staff and participants in the Neighborhood Center's programs give personal witness to the positive difference that the Neighborhood Center is making in their lives!

The fall GNJUMW meeting held October 20, 2018 at the GNJ MRC focused on Mass Incarceration of People of Color with a panel discussion on Breaking the School to Prison Pipeline. Rev. Heidi Schulz Kugler, ordained elder in the GNJUMC and currently serving as the National Chaplaincy Administrator for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Washington, DC was our guest preacher and panel discussion leader. She has had 22 years of chaplaincy experience on the county, state and federal levels. The other panelists included Sharon Allen, a retired teacher and a field representative in the Camden City Schools for the NJ Education Association; Madelaine Garcia, a vocational rehabilitation counselor; Rev. Rupert Hall, Jr. JD, head of the GNJ Black Caucus of Black Methodists for Church Renewal and pastor of the Turning Point UMC, Trenton, NJ; and Michael Landis, Executive Director of the Neighborhood Center, Camden, NJ.

This program was followed by our annual business meeting and installation of new officers, as nominated by the GNJUMW Nominating Committee. We welcomed Choong-Hee Lee as Vice-President, Patricia Grant as Recording Secretary, Marcia Roebuck as the Chair of Nominations and Carolyn Pendleton and Millie Grey as part of the Nominating Committee. Pat Bodden was appointed as a member to the Charter or Racial Justice Task Force.

I have had the honor to serve with a wonderful Leadership Team throughout this past year and I thank God for the privilege and the opportunity to be the President of GNJUMW.

Submitted by,
Kathleen W. Schulz, GNJUMW President

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

United Theological Seminary

459 men and women are being equipped as faithful, fruitful pastors and Christian leaders for the Church:

292 Masters Students 167 Doctoral Students Third largest United Methodist seminary in the United States

Founded nearly 150 years ago by Bishop Milton Wright, father of famed aviators Wilbur and Orville Wright, United has continued that spirit of innovation through:

Online degrees:

98% of master's students have taken one or more course online while studying at United.

United students live in 39 different states.

Week-long intensives fulfill UMC residency requirements.

Live Interactive Virtual Education (LIVE):

New grant brings the latest technology in virtual education.

Participate in on-campus courses via webcam and enjoy live lectures and real-time discussion with faculty and peers.

Doctor of Ministry Degree:

Become a doctor for the Church, addressing a real problem or challenge in your church or community.

Study under a mentor who is an expert in their field and learn alongside a small group of dedicated peers.

3-year program that allows you to complete project as you go, leading to a 78% program graduation rate in 2017 (vs. 54% average among other seminaries)

Practical education designed to resource the Church:

The majority of United faculty have pastored churches.

91% of entering United students are already serving in ministry, bringing that context to the classroom.

A focus on Church Renewal:

165 Course of Study students

42 students in the Hispanic Christian Academy (3-year Spanish online course of ministry program for Hispanic lay pastors and leaders)

Certificates in Church Planting, Disability Ministry, and Supervision

Academic AND Spiritual Growth:

95% of students say the United community supports both their academic and spiritual growth.

Diverse Christian Views:

Over 30 different denominations

19 international students from 15 different countries

96% of students feel their views are respected in the classroom/seminary community and say they have been taught to respect the views of others.

47% of students who reported are African-American, 43% Caucasian and 10% represent other ethnicities

We thank God for the men and women coming to United because God has called them to serve the least and the lost. We pray as the Lord Jesus instructed his disciples saying, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2).

Data represents fall 2018 headcount enrollment, unless otherwise specified. ATS 2017-2018 Annual Data Tables. Data represents fall 2017 headcount enrollment. ATS 2017-2018 Strategic Information Report for United Theological Seminary. Graduation rates represent the percentage of students who were able to complete their chosen degree within a specified period of time which approximates two times the normal length of the degree.

Data represents unduplicated headcount enrollment in the 2017-2018 academic year. United Theological Seminary 2017-2018 Student Satisfaction Survey, in which 30% of students responded.

Submitted by,

Kent Millard, President, United Theological Seminary

REPORTS TO THE 2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Young Adult Council

The Council on Young Adult Ministries champions the young adult ministry in the local churches and districts of the annual conference. We are excited to report that we are strengthening our strategic partnerships with other conference agencies and Next Gen Ministries to help our work to benefit the young adults of Greater New Jersey Conference.

In 2018 the YA Council remained connected with the IGNITE Movement and partnering with the GNJ Youth Council, assembled a team of over 30 Young Adults from GNJ to form the IGNITE Squad for the annual event in Wildwood, NJ. This continues to be an opportunity for emerging young adult leaders to take on roles of responsibility as well as form new relationships and spiritual fellowship. Additionally, young adults from across the Conference participated in the IGNITE Leaders Day Training in both 2018 and early 2019.

We partnered with the Youth Council to host a Pre-Conference Retreat at the Pinelands Center for the Youth and Young Adult delegation to 2018 Annual Conference. This new retreat provides a setting to learn about the mechanics of legislation and to discuss current issues in the church and our denomination. We plan to host the retreat again in 2019.

Coordinating with GNJ Committee on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, we nominated GNJ YA clergy candidate Rachel Callender for a Bossey Scholarship. Our congratulations to Ms. Callender who was awarded a \$10,000 scholarship for participation in the fall 2019 Graduate Session at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

The YA Council, together with the Youth Council and the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, has forged a new strategic alliance with Next Gen Ministries. This will increase opportunities for young adults across the Conference to engage, grow and develop leadership skills in youth, campus and camping ministries.

The YA Council now moves forward with the Conference into the new five-year strategic plan and will continue to find ways to identify, engage, and equip young adult leaders.

Submitted by,
Blair Goold, Chair

Youth Ministries, Council on

We continue to work with GNJ Next Gen ministry to explore several areas of potential ways to serve and grow. We recognize the sustainability of meaningful youth ministry programs are on the decline and realize the need to connect smaller youth groups. In working together, we can create networks and share resources with one another. Collaborative ministry locally and regionally seems to be a need and we as the Council will explore ways which we can help support events.

We promote and encourage IGNITE and IGNITE Youth Leaders Day. IGNITE continues to provide high quality programing: deepening faith, growing relationships, mission opportunities and positive mentoring. We also work with the youth delegates of GNJ to Annual Conference.

The Council on Youth are grateful through the support of GNJ and in partnership with the Council on Young Adults we were able to send one youth to the Global Convocation held in South Africa, who had voice and vote. The youth represented GNJ and NEJ. We would like to thank GNJ for their ongoing support of the Council on Youth Ministry.

Submitted by,
Deborah Barnett, Council on Youth Ministry